

348. In famine. Reversion to cannibalism under a total lack of other food ought not to be noted. We have some historical cases, however, in which during famine people became so familiarized with cannibalism that their horror of it was overcome. Abdallatif¹ mentions a great famine In Egypt In the year 1200, due to a failure of the inundation of the Nile. Resort was had to cannibalism to escape death. At first the civil authorities burned alive those who were detected, being moved by astonishment and horror. Later, those sentiments were not aroused. " Men were seen to make ordinary meals of human flesh, to use it as a dainty, and to lay up provision of it. . . . The usage, having been introduced, spread to all the provinces. Then it ceased to cause surprise. . . . People talked of it as an ordinary and indifferent thing. This indifference was due to habit and familiarity." This case shows that the horror of cannibalism is due to tradition in the mores. Diodorus says that the ancient Egyptians, during a famine, ate each other rather than any animal which they considered sacred.²

349. Cannibalism and ghost fear. Human sacrifice and cannibalism are not necessarily conjoined. Often it seems as if they once were so, but have been separated.³ Whatever men want ghosts want. If the former are cannibals, the latter will be the same. Often the notion is that the gods eat the souls. In this view, the men eat the flesh of sacrificed beasts and sacrifice the blood, in which is the life or soul, to the gods. This the Jews did. They also burned the kidneys, the fat of the kidneys, and the liver, which they thought to be the seat of life. These they might not eat.⁴ When men change, the gods do not. Hence

the rites of human sacrifice and cannibalism
continue in religion
long after they disappear from the mores, in
spite of loathing.
Loathing is a part of the sacrifice.⁵ The self-
control and self-
subjugation enter into the sacrament. All who
participate, in
religion, in an act which gravely affects the
imagination as

¹ *Relation de VEgypte*, 360.

² Diodorus, I, 84.

⁸ Ratzel, *Volkerkunde*, II, 124 ; Martius, *Ethnog. Bras.*, 129;
£/^(,r, LXXV, 260.

* W. R. Smith, *Relig. of the Semites*, 379.

⁶ Lippert, *Kulturgesch* ^ II, 292.